

An Unlikely Convert Pt. 9— Proof of a God-Given Calling and Message

Galatians 1:11-24, Wednesday, March 19, 2025

A Pastoral 9 1 1 Pt. 9

Galatians 1:6-10

- I. The Problem Defined—An SSA vv. 6-7
- II. The Seriousness of the Problem vv. 6, 8-9
 - A. Danger of Deserting God Himself v. 6
 - B. Danger of Proclaiming a Message Obscuring the Narrow Gate vv. 8-9

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- III. The Proper Center for Living the Gospel v. 10

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Galatians 1:11-24

- I. My Calling and Message Came from a Direct Revelation from God vv. 11-12

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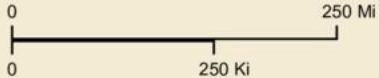
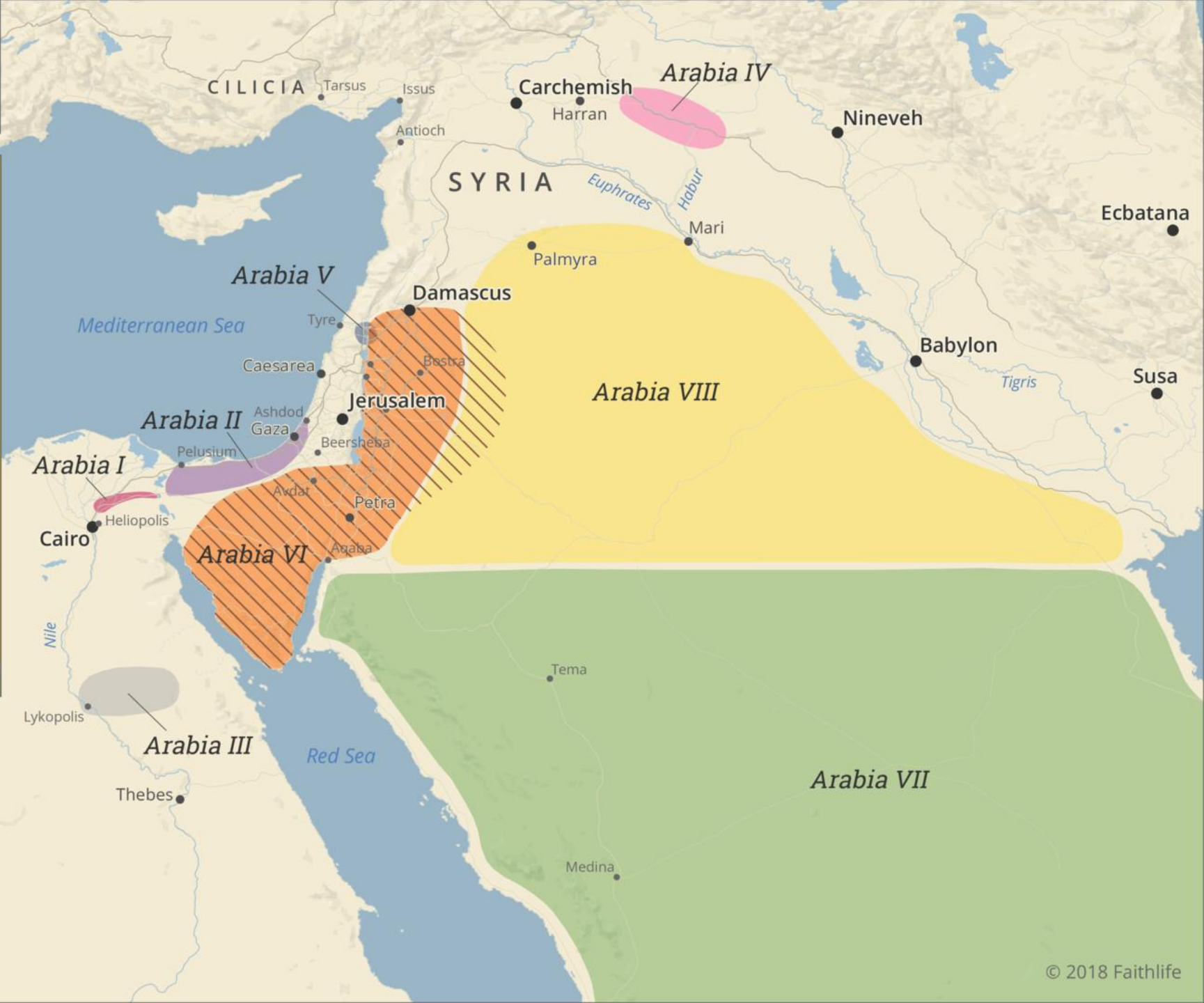
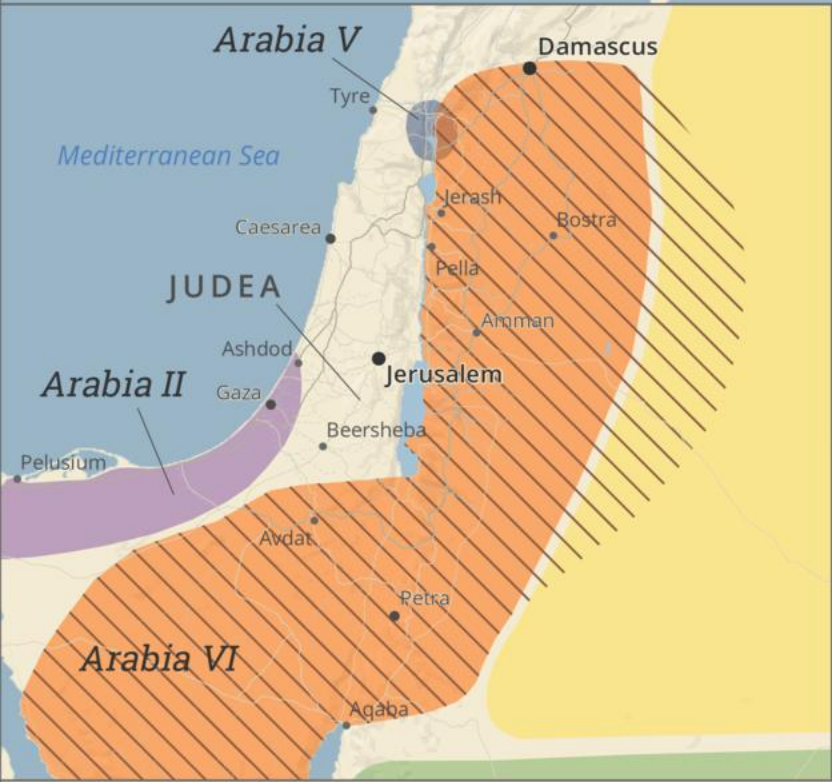
“So, King Agrippa, I did not prove disobedient to the heavenly vision,
Acts 26:19

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- IV. Though I was WITH the other apostles, they were NOT the source of my Message and Calling vv. 16b-24

"Arabia" during the life of Paul

 *Arabia IX*



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In Damascus the ethnarch under Aretas the king was guarding the city of the Damascenes in order to seize me, 33 and I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and so escaped his hands.

2 Corinthians 11:32-33

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Before throw out the argument that truth must be in line with certain central sources like the twelve apostles in Jerusalem, think about things that have been central to helping determine if solid/wrong. **What are some of these “HOME BASES” that have given you stability/help process, and what happens if they are rattled?**

- Right Home Bases: humility knowing we see dimly, based on God’s character, pursue Him and do what we know is pleasing to God even when it doesn’t make sense and we feel rattled; where has He said that we will find Him and His guidance? Context of Scripture—interpreting Scripture inside of community; thinking about who/what getting the glory (God or us) track record of whole redemption history
- **Good Bases Perhaps, but not quite center of foundation:** home church you grow up in and those lifted up as “heroes of the faith,” purpose and frequency and method of corporate worship, those closest to you passionate about a means of growth or a specific teaching (missions, service, intellectual depth, feelings of the Spirit),
- **When rattled:** not sure what the center should be so easy to go toward what understand/makes sense OR that answers concerns with the last church or rough circumstance in life

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While all of this may seem irrelevant to each of us, what we have once again is a sociological crisis. Washington, D.C., is crucial to American politics (what comes from Washington is final); there is no place like that for Western Christianity (though Wheaton, Illinois; Grand Rapids, Michigan; Nashville, Tennessee; and Fort Worth, Texas, have each made their cases). For earliest first-century Christianity, Jerusalem was home, and from it all good things were supposed to come. We are surely aware of the critical role Jerusalem played in ancient Judaism; the same holds true for earliest Christianity. There resided all the authorities and knowledge needed for the development of Christian thinking.

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The apostles were centered there for much of the time, and the knowledge of the Bible was explored there. The crisis was simple: Was Jerusalem the mother church or not? Were the Jerusalem leaders the authorities or not? Who would set the agenda for the Christian movement—Diaspora Gentile Christians or the traditional leaders in the homeland? Would the gospel of Jesus Christ eliminate its heritage in Judaism or would it stay true to the covenant established with Abraham? The crisis was whether or not Israel would have a privileged existence and status in the new movement.

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The issue then became Jewish distinctives as opposed to the heterogeneous and, often enough, non-Jewish life of the Diaspora. Paul countered this by demonstrating that his gospel was not simply Jewish; rather, it came from Jesus Christ and comprised all people. Therefore, it did not demand the nationalization of Gentiles. What Paul opposed was a cultural imperialism that presented itself exclusively in religious attire.

Scot McNight

Apostle Paul's Early Journeys 33 - 44 A.D.



New Testament Roman Provinces



What is amazing about this testimony from these in Judea? (or what is included/assumed by vv. 23-24)

- That they believed that he really change; that they didn't cancel culture him
- Saw hand of Christ working in Paul's life where these other Jews did not;
- Religious leaders thought they had defeated the Way, now Paul "switched sides," they are overjoyed at the grace of God
- v. 12 revelation of Jesus Christ leads to him accurately giving the gospel of Jesus

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Not only was Paul unknown by sight to the Judean churches, but also his gospel had certainly not been learned from them. **Yet they recognized his gospel at once as that which they preached, and as that which he had previously attacked when he persecuted them. This means that what Peter and James are recorded as doing in 2:6-7, the country churches of Judea had already done long ago.** They had accorded Paul full status and recognition. This is inescapable logic if we take Paul's position that the message validates the messenger. That this was the view of the Judean churches is shown by their praise to God for what he had done in Paul: as he says, they glorified God because of me.

R. Alan Cole

What do we need to head towards being more confident in being able to hear testimony of conversion and glorify God for His work in their lives?

- Make sure we know the gospel ourselves (i.e. Matt. 7 necessitates the Lordship of Christ for salvation)
- Getting background from where they were to see transformation in their lives
- Testimony of others here validates what God is doing—when talking w others, how can you find what other's think of their conversion
- Need to want to hear testimonies of conversion—if we are not caring about people being saved or come to the Lord, then not looking for it or excited about it
- Being more God-centered, Christ-centered than human centered—look beyond what we look for and value—not looking for people like me or people being converted like me; God doesn't look at the same things we do, there is mystery in His dealings; must take sin, repentance, faithfulness to Lord seriously

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We need to assert up front that independence is not the most important description of Paul's gospel and is not the issue on which we should set our focus. Our attention moves easily to independence because of our own Western political ideologies where freedom of speech and other freedoms are central to personal happiness. Rather, the most important description of Paul's gospel is that it is a direct revelation from Jesus Christ and, therefore, not an indirect gospel that had come to him through the Jerusalem authorities. If Paul's gospel were indirect (from Jerusalem), it could still be correct but it would need to be confirmed by Jerusalem.

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But since Paul's gospel is a direct revelation, it does not need to be confirmed by Jerusalem. In fact, the gospel emanating from Jerusalem could be wrong and, to reverse the trend, in need of being confirmed by the Pauline expression. Only after arguing that the gospel is a direct revelation from Jesus Christ does Paul argue that his gospel is independent.

Scot McKnight

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- IV. Though I was WITH the other apostles, they were NOT the source of my Message and Calling vv. 16b-24
- V. Even when I DID spend time with the other apostles, they Did Not Adjust the Gospel I Preached 2:1-5

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And he left for Tarsus to look for Saul; 26 and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And for an entire year they met with the church and taught considerable numbers; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch. 27 Now at this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. 28 One of them named Agabus stood up and began to indicate by the Spirit that there would certainly be a great famine all over the world. And this took place in the reign of Claudius. 29 And in the proportion that any of the disciples had means, each of them determined to send a contribution for the relief of the brethren living in Judea. 30 And this they did, sending it in charge of Barnabas and Saul to the elders.

Acts 11:25-30

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“For if they diverged from Paul, his work would likely unravel when the view of Jerusalem became known in the Pauline churches. Indeed, it may have been tempting for the pillar apostles to compromise with the Judaizers on circumcision, for their ministry was mainly to Jewish Christians, who were circumcised.”

Tom Schreiner

What does Paul coming at this same point of authority and calling from God from so many angles show us?



What would be needed for the Galatian believers to actually entertain Paul's digging/probing through all these red flag issues when they were already trusting these other teachers?

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What is a universal foundation that we all can claim as we look for the supernatural trustworthiness of God, His gospel, and proof of our true regeneration and calling?

Plane English: How do we know the gospel presented in the Bible is from God and where can we look for proof that we are truly saved and called to serve God in a specific way?

1. We have been given direct revelation from God inside history through the words recorded in Scripture which lead to the gospel of Scripture.
2. We **MUST** have a supernatural work of the Spirit of God to confirm the truth of the gospel so that it truly IS the gospel for us.

Your confidence for your conversion and calling come **NOT** from **your experiences, your convictions, your traditions, or your interpretation of mission, but from your tie to the gospel message from God through His spokesmen tying us together to be a dwelling of God.**

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Signs of true fruit:

1. **Faithfulness** to a God-given Mission.
2. **Gratitude** to God for His grace and mercy given to us through Christ.

As those professing to live by faith in the Son of God, where did you meditate on Him today as Creator, Redeemer, Sovereign Sustainer, and Final Judge?

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“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life. 25 **“Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.**

John 5:24–25